

REMARKS

Claims 55-98 are pending. Claims 55-94 stand rejected. Claims 95-98 are hereby cancelled. Claims 55-94 are currently pending. Claims 55, 66, 79, 86 and 91 are the only pending independent claims and are currently amended. Applicants respectfully submit that none of the amended independent claims introduce new matter. Support for the amended subject matter of claims 55, 66 and 79 appears in the instantly filed specification at Example 1, pages 72-74.

35 U.S.C. §112 Rejections

Claims 55-90 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §112, as containing subject matter that was allegedly not described in the originally filed specification and as indefinite. In particular, the Office Action asserts that there is no support for the phrase “an ambience of chemical reaction” and that “it is not clear what is meant by an ambience of chemical reaction.” Applicants have deleted the phrase “ambience of chemical reaction” from claims 55, 66 and 79.

Claims 57, 82 and 87 also stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §112, as being indefinite. The Office Action asserts that Formula (2) is either missing or not properly identified by these claims. These claims have been amended to correctly incorporate Formula (2). Formula (2) appears on page 20 of the instant specification.

35 U.S.C. §102/103 Rejections

Claims 55-65, 79-85 and 91-94 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as anticipated by or, in the alternative, under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being obvious over U.S. Pat. No. 4,717,643 to Shreve, et. al. (hereinafter “Shreve”).

With respect to amended independent claims 55, 66, 79 and 91, Shreve does not teach or suggest a reaction wherein, “the isocyanate group or compound, as measured by an IR absorption spectrum at a peak of $2,200\text{ cm}^{-1}$ is no longer present” before addition of an alcohol. According to one embodiment of the presently claimed invention, consumption of these isocyanate groups prior to alcohol addition allows the alcohol to decompose acid anhydride groups, which in turn, helps to stabilize the polymer. Since Shreve does not

teach or suggest the extent of isocyanate remaining in its reaction, Shreve cannot teach the unexpected stability provided by Applicants' invention.

With respect to amended independent claim 91, the Office Action does not allege that Shreve teaches or suggests "preparing a solution by dissolving or dispersing the intermediate product in a coating solvent, adding an alcohol having a boiling point with a 75 °C or less difference with respect to the boiling point of the coating solvent and/or an evaporation rate with a 90(n-BuOAc=100) or less difference with respect to the evaporation rate of the coating solvent, wherein the alcohol is added before viscosity rise of the solution or before completion of viscosity rise of the solution for reaction so as to prepare a hardenable polymer, and mixing the obtained hardenable polymer with the coating solvent." In fact, the Office Action does not allege that Shreve teaches or suggests a "coating solvent." If future office actions maintain the rejection of independent claim 91 over Shreve, Applicants respectfully request that the Office Action set forth with specificity why Shreve renders this claim unpatentable.

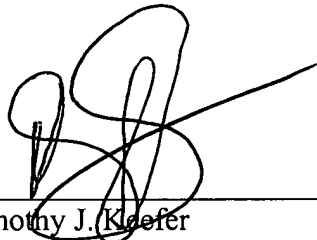
In view of the foregoing, Applicants respectfully submit that amended independent claims 55, 66, 79 and 91 are allowable over Shreve. Accordingly, dependent claims 56-65, 67-78, 80-85 and 92-94 are also allowable as depending from allowable base independent claims.

With respect to independent claims 66 and 86, the Office Action does not allege that Shreve anticipates or renders obvious the subject matter recited by these claims. Applicants therefore respectfully submit that independent claims 66 and 86 are allowable over Shreve and should be passed to allowance. Applicants further submit that dependent claims 67-78 and 87-90 are allowable as depending from allowable base independent claims.

CONCLUSION

In view of the above amendments and remarks, Applicants respectfully submit that claims 55-94 are allowable. Applicants therefore request favorable reconsideration and allowance of all pending claims in the present application. If in the Examiner's opinion, a telephonic interview would advance the instant application, Applicants' representative invites the Examiner to contact him at the telephone number below.

Respectfully submitted,



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